

Library
1953.

THE RURAL DISTRICT
OF
ST. AUSTELL



ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

To the Chairman and Councillors of the
Rural District of St. Austell.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the
Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the District for the year 1953.

The conditions prevailing have again been very satisfactory
with a low mortality experience. There have been considerable outbreaks
of measles and whooping cough but fortunately with no associated deaths.

I am indebted to Mr. Lawless, the Chief Sanitary Inspector
and to Mr. Townsend, the Council's Engineer for considerable portions
of this report.

I wish to thank Mr. Mitchell and the Heads of Departments
and their Staffs for help and co-operation.

It is a pleasure to record gratitude to the Chairman and
Members of the Public Health Committee for their continued interest and
support.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient Servant,

JAMES TURNER.

SECTION A.

Natural and Social Conditions of the Area

Area (in acres) 82,389.

Population (Mid-year 1953) (Estimated) 22,030

Number of inhabited houses (6,288 as at 1st April 1954)

Rateable value £86,049

Product of a penny rate £349.

As elsewhere in Cornwall there is a marked seasonal rise in population during the holiday period. The main occupations are clay-working and agriculture. Both are healthy and the former is not associated with any industrial disease.

The District extends across the breadth of the County and has a northern and southern seaboard. As a result there are two types of climate - the northern, more bracing with slightly more sunshine and a slightly lower temperature than the southern, which is mild with prevailing S.W. winds. The mean annual temperature is about 51° F.

Rainfall The rainfall recorded at Hendra Pumping Station for the year amounted to 30.84 inches, precipitation occurred on 167 days, The maximum daily fall was 1.18" on the 30th July, whilst July was also the wettest month with 4.20". March was the driest month with 0.96".

The year as a whole was the driest that has been recorded at this Station.

Summary of Vital Statistics

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rate/1,000 Population</u>	
				<u>Rural Dist.</u>	<u>England & Wales</u>
Legitimate	178	144	339	15.4	
Illegitimate	8	9			
For comparison with other areas rate corrected for age and sex distribution				15.8	15.5
<u>Still Births</u>					
Legitimate	4	3	7	0.32	0.35
Illegitimate	-	-			
<u>Deaths</u>	108	108	216	9.8	
For comparison with other areas rate corrected for age and sex distribution				8.5	11.4
<u>Maternal Mortality</u>				<u>Rate/1,000 Total Births</u>	
				0.0	0.76
<u>Infant Mortality (Deaths under 1 yr. of age)</u>				<u>Rate/1,000 Live Births</u>	
Legitimate	3	5	8	23.6	26.8
Illegitimate	-	-			
<u>Deaths from Enteritis and Diarrhoea (under 2 yrs. of age).</u>				0.0	1.1

The rates shown above are very favourable compared with those for the whole Country, but it is wise to remember that with the relatively small numbers being considered wide fluctuations are possible.

The following table gives the causes of infant deaths:-

Cause	Age in weeks					Total
	Under 1 week	2	3	4	5 weeks - 12 mths.	
Premature	1	-	-	-	-	1
Premature & Intracranial haemorrhage	1	-	-	-	-	1
Pneumonia	-	-	-	-	1	1
" & Hydrocephalus	-	-	-	-	1	1
Bronchopneumonia	1	-	-	-	1	2
Meningococcal infection	-	-	-	-	1	1
Spine Bifida & hydrocephalus	-	-	-	-	1	1
	3	-	-	-	5	8

Approximately 50% of this mortality is preventable.

These figures represent a considerable improvement over those for last year.

The following is an abbreviated list of the causes of death of persons of all ages:-

	M.	F.
1) Tub: of resp: sys:	2	1
2) Syphilitic dis:	1	1
3) Meningococcal inf:	1	1
4) Malig: neoplasm, stomach	3	4
5) " " Lung, bronchus	3	-
6) " " breast	-	2
7) " " uterus	-	5
8) Other malig: & lymph: neoplasms	12	5
9) Diabetes	2	3
10) Vasc: lesions of Nervous sys:	7	21
11) Coronary dis: angina	16	10
12) Hypertension with heart dis:	1	1
13) Other heart dis:	17	20
14) Other circ: dis:	4	1
15) Influenza	2	6
16) Pneumonia	5	2
17) Bronchitis	7	2
18) Other resp: dis:	1	-
19) Ulcer of stomach & duodenum	2	2
20) Nephritis & nephrosis	3	1
21) Hyperplasia of prostate	3	-
22) Congenital malformations	.	2
23) Other def: & ill-def: dis:	11	15
24) Motor vehicle acc:	1	-
25) All other acc:	2	2
26) Suicide	2	-
27) Homicide & oper: of war	-	1
	—	—
All causes	108	108
	—	—

Malignant disease caused 15.7% of all deaths, motor vehicles and other accidents 2.3%.

Since 1950 ten male and two female deaths have been recorded as due to cancer of the lung or bronchus. This is 9% of all deaths due to malignant disease. There has been no change over this period.

The following short table gives the percentage distribution of ages at death:-

Age Group	Males %	Females %
0 - 1	2.7	4.7
1 - 59	23.2	19.6
60 - 69	25.0	8.4
70 - 79	23.2	29.0
80 - 89	23.2	32.7
90 plus	2.7	5.6

SECTION B.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority

(a) Medical Officer of Health

J.G.S. Turner, M.B.,D.P.H. 1st Jan. - 31st Dec.

(b) Sanitary Inspectors (Whole time)

H.G. Lawless, A.R.S.I.,M.S.I.A., Food Inspectors' Certificate.
T.J. Down, A.R.S.I.

Laboratory facilities

These are available at the Royal Cornwall Infirmary, Truro, where all material for investigation is sent.

Diphtheria Prophylaxis

In addition to the supplies of diphtheria prophylactic previously available, supplies of whooping cough vaccine both alone and combined with that for diphtheria are available at the Health Area Office, St.Austell, and can be obtained by Medical Practitioners on request.

Ambulance facilities

These are provided from the main centres at St. Austell and Newquay and in addition from country centres at Indian Queens, Fowey and St.Blazey. The work carried out from the above centres during the year is shown in the following table. About one-third of the patients carried belonged to the Rural District.

(a) <u>Ambulance</u>	Patients	Miles
St. Austell and Newquay	4,148	58,672
(b) <u>Utilicons</u>		
St. Austell and Newquay	10,926	102,622
(c) <u>Hospital Car Service</u>		
St. Austell and Newquay	2,727	25,831
(d) <u>Country Centre Ambulances</u>		
Indian Queens, Fowey & St.Blazey	455	15,516

Thanks are due to the voluntary organisations who helped, to Mrs. Batchelor and Miss Boldock, Organisers of the Hospital Car Service, and to many ladies and gentlemen who provided transport on request.

Nursing Services

The establishment of nurses who carry out domiciliary services is as follows:-

District Nurse - Midwife - Health Visitor	11
Whole-time Health Visitor	1

Some adjustments in the district boundaries were carried out. The services provided have worked smoothly.

Domiciliary Midwifery

All nurses are now trained in the use of gas/air anaesthesia and this is available to all patients. About 60% of women have their babies at home.

Ante-Natal Care

There are no ante-natal clinics in the rural area and all pregnant women are referred either to St. Austell or to Newquay.

Infant Welfare

The centre at Roche has continued to be very successful with an average attendance of 15.9. A new Centre was established at Indian Queens in September. The attendance has averaged 16.5.

Care and After Care

Two cases of tuberculosis were helped by grants from the County.

Young children on discharge from hospital are followed up by the District Nurses.

Domestic Help Service

This service has worked well, but difficulty has been experienced during the summer months in obtaining spare-time helps. At the end of the year the establishment was increased to the equivalent of seven full-time helps.

Thanks are due to Miss Stokes and to the ladies who assist her in organising this Service. A total of 46 persons of whom 9 were maternity cases were given help.

Hospitals

There is no hospital in the district and cases are sent to Newquay, Fowey and St. Austell District Hospitals, to the R.C.I. at Truro for special investigations and treatment, to Redruth in the case of maternity and to the Isolation Hospital at Truro in the case of infectious diseases.

Clinics

The following clinics are held at the places and dates indicated:-

Child Welfare	(St. Austell - Moorland Road - 1st and 3rd Wednesday
	(Newquay - Ambulance Hall - Weekly - Thursday
	(Par - Gott Hall - 2nd and 4th Tuesday
	(Roche - Church Hall - Monthly
	(Indian - Ambulance Hall - Monthly
	Queens

Ante-Natal	(St. Austell - Moorland Road - Weekly - Monday forenoon
	(Newquay - Hospital - Weekly - Monday afternoon
Orthopaedic	(St. Austell - Moorland Road - Weekly - Tuesday forenoon
	(Newquay - Hospital - Weekly - Monday
Tuberculosis	(St. Austell - Hospital - Weekly - Monday
	(Newquay - Hospital - 1st, 3rd and 5th Tuesday
Tuberculosis (Contacts)	(St. Austell - 1st Monday and last Tuesday (afternoon)
	(Newquay - 3rd Tuesday (afternoon)
Dental	(St. Austell - Moorland Road - every day
	(Newquay - Berry Road - Thrice weekly
Ophthalmic	(St. Austell - Aylmer Place - 2nd and 4th Wednesday
	(Newquay - Hospital - by arrangement
E.N.T.	(St. Austell - Moorland Road - by arrangement
	(Newquay - Hospital - by arrangement

SECTION C.

Sanitary Conditions of the District

(1) Water (i) New Constructions

(a) Queens-Fraddon-Summercourt Water Scheme

Work on this scheme was completed and the scheme became fully operative on the 14th February. The scheme is functioning satisfactorily, the water is, of course, purchased in bulk from the Newquay & District Water Company.

(b) Talskiddy Water Scheme

Work on this scheme was able to start several months ahead of the original schedule due to improved deliveries of materials. Pipe laying was commenced on the 11th September and the whole scheme was completed and brought into operation on the 7th November. 18 out of a possible 22 properties are taking water from the mains.

(c) Bears Down Water Supply Scheme

The preparation of plans and other details in connection with this scheme were commenced during the year. If the scheme is accepted and the work carried out, it will bring a satisfactory solution to the problems of the water supply for St.Mawgan and parts of St.Columb parishes.

The proposal is for taking the necessary quantity of water from the reservoir at Bears Down constructed under the Wadebridge De Lank Scheme.

(ii) Existing Schemes

(a) Water Samples

During the year 167 samples of water taken from various public supplies were submitted for analyses with the following results:-

Satisfactory	161
Unsatisfactory	<u>6</u>
	167

In general the unsatisfactory results were obtained from small village schemes where the control of quality is difficult. The unsatisfactory samples were obtained early in the year and as a result of the action taken an improvement was effected and maintained throughout the rest of the year.

In addition to the above, ten private supplies have been sampled with the following results:-

Satisfactory	5
Unsatisfactory	3
Reasonably safe	<u>2</u>
	10

(b) Water Shortages

During the Summer water shortages were experienced on the systems supplying St.Dennis, St.Stephen and St.Sampson, and it was necessary to introduce restrictions.

At St.Sampson the water was consumed as fast as it could be pumped to the reservoirs and it was not possible to build up any storage. On the St.Stephen-St.Dennis system it was necessary to turn off supplies from 7 p.m. to 6.30 a.m. daily between the 12th September and 3rd October and again from the 20th October to the 4th November.

In the hamlet of Mount Joy, Colan, there is no public supply, but the wells which normally supply the residents failed and it was necessary to cart water there on three occasions.

(2) Sewerage

(i) New Constructions

At Trethosa, St. Stephen the diversion of the sewer to enable quarrying operations to expand was completed on the 16th April. The job involved the excavation of a considerable quantity of rock.

The scheme for the construction of sludge beds at existing sewage disposal works was commenced during the year and beds were constructed at Nanpean, Carpalla and Roche.

(ii) Existing Sewage Disposal Works

The effluents from the Council's existing disposal works continued to be unsatisfactory, but schemes are in course of preparation for improvement of the works to overcome this defect.

(iii) Cesspool Emptying Vehicle

The work of this vehicle during the year has included the following:-

207	emptyings	of	private	cesspools
150	"	"	Council house	cesspools
63	"	"	Lane Slaughterhouse	cesspool
15	"	"	Cesspools outside	district

In addition to the above, the vehicle has been employed on sludge removal from sewage disposal works.

(3) Disinfection of Premises

Terminal disinfection is still carried out after T.B. and other infectious diseases.

(4) Disinfestation

Fortunately this operation is rarely necessary in this area, there was one particularly difficult and obstinate case of infestation by meal mite in an otherwise perfectly clean house.

(5) Rodent Control

Work continues to be done by one operative using a 10 cwt. truck, dealing with domestic and trade premises, sewers, sewage works and refuse tips. More attention is being paid to farms, and it is evident that the Cornwall Agricultural Executive Committee squads are giving satisfaction to the farmers, as in only one case was informal action necessary. The operator and truck are also used in transporting maintenance material etc. and in carrying out disinfections.

Summary of Works, 1953

Domestic premises treatments	1218
Trade " "	174
Refuse tips and sewage works	18
Villages surveyed	29
Farms inspected	126
Block controls	<u>33</u>
Total No. of Inspections etc.	<u>2350</u>

(6) Nuisances

Forty-three nuisances of a general type were dealt with informally and duly abated. In my last report I referred to a serious aerial nuisance at Treviscoe caused by emission of sulphurous gases from a kiln. The matter has been kept under review and the Company's abatement measure has continued to work satisfactorily and there is now no nuisance.

The villages of Trewoon, Polgooth and Sticker particularly have a number of drainage nuisances which cannot effectively be abated until sewers are provided, and in view of the state policy of the Ministry stressing the need and encouraging the provision of modern living amenities, it is now, I suggest, a matter of urgency to provide sewerage systems in many places where they are lacking, for without them the provision of these amenities is in most cases impossible.

(7) Public Cleansing and Refuse Disposal

No change of method, vehicles, etc., from last year, but the condition of our main tip at St. Stephen gives rise to some concern, and ways and means are being investigated to put the service on a more modern basis.

(8) Public Conveniences

There have been no additions to the existing seven in the area, but such conveniences are badly needed in two places, i.e. Indian Queens and Mawgan Porth and it is hoped that they will be provided in the near future.

SECTION D.

Housing

The number of houses now owned by the Council has increased to 644, which is inclusive of the 237 pre-war houses.

Many of the most serious cases of overcrowding have been housed, but the number of applications for Council houses remains as at the end of the previous year at 290.

The following is an analysis of the applications:-

(1)	Number without separate houses	148
(2)	Number with separate houses living in	
	(a) unfit houses	49
	(b) overcrowded conditions	<u>38</u>
		87
(3)	Number of unmarried persons	32
(4)	Number of persons requiring houses for other reasons	23

Types of houses required by the above applicants are as follows:-

1	bedroom	5
2	"	206
3	"	57
4	"	8
	Unclassified	14

I would stress the need to find some way to house the socially unsatisfactory families in the community. Children who grow up in institutions and camps where these families tend to be segregated have a smaller chance of growing up to be useful citizens than those who have a stable background.

The houses provided need not be modern Council houses and sub-standard dwellings acquired by the Council would meet the need.

Private Enterprise Building

There was a total of 19 private dwellings completed during the year.

Houses built by the Council

(i) Site preparation Works

The construction of roads, sewers and water mains for the extension of Highfield Avenue, to be known as "High Cross", was completed during the year with the exception of road and footpath surfacing. These items will be completed after the houses are erected.

(ii) Non-traditional Houses

(a) Trelowth Estate

The 10 houses which were started in June 1952 were completed and occupied during February 1953.

(iii) Traditional Houses

The following houses were completed and occupied during the course of the year:-

Creakavose, St. Stephen	22
Harmony Place, Roche	2
Carloggas, St. Mawgan	4
St. Eve	<u>2</u>
	<u>30</u>

(iv) Summary of Housing Progress

Dwellings occupied at 1.1.53	588
Dwellings completed in 1953 (all types)	40
Additional dwellings under construction	<u>98</u>
	<u>726</u>

SECTION E.

Inspection and Supervision of Food

Milk

The majority of retailers in the area are now selling bottled milk. Of the non-producer retailers, three have been granted licences for the sale of Tuberculin Tested milk and four have been licensed for the sale of Pasteurised milk. All the above have been licensed as Distributors and their premises registered under the Milk & Dairies Regulations, 1949. Each of these non-producers premises was visited from time to time throughout the year.

Ice Cream

There is now a total of 79 premises registered for the sale of Ice Cream and all of these sell only the pre-packed variety. There are no manufacturers of either hot or cold mix Ice Cream operating in the district. Ice Cream selling vans continue to run over the whole of the district, these are fitted with a water storage tank and hand wash basin so that the utmost cleanliness can be observed at all times. These vans operate from the areas of adjoining Local Authorities where there is strict control over the method of manufacture.

Meat Inspection

All the meat inspection duties carried out at the Tregonissey Slaughterhouse continue to be shared with the two Urban Sanitary Inspectors in the proportion of one week in three. A few minor improvements have been carried out and the slaughterhouse may now be considered reasonably satisfactory. The meat inspection at the Lane Slaughterhouse continues to be carried out by the Sanitary Inspector at Newquay whose area it serves. After some considerable pressure a certain number of improvements have been made at the Slaughterhouse.

Food Premises

There is a total of approximately 70 premises where food commodities of a wide and varying nature are sold. Most of these are of the small country type where the shop is either attached or forms part of the dwelling house. Generally the shops are in a fair state of repair and hot and cold water together with adequate sanitary arrangements are available within the adjoining dwelling house.

Nine bakeries are spread over the area and an active interest has been taken by the owners of most of these to improve them to such an extent as to bring them up to a satisfactory standard.

The district is served by 19 butchers, each of whom sell their meat either from their shop or from a van. The shops are generally of the small family butcher type and attached to the dwelling house where there is invariably an adequate supply of hot and cold water and satisfactory sanitary arrangements. Many of these shops have tiled walls and marble slab counters, so facilitating the work of cleansing the shop. Many of the butchers have had their vans fitted out in the form of travelling shops.

The six cafes are relatively few in number in proportion to the area of the district, and most are situated at the two seaside resorts. All fourteen Fish and Chip shops are now kept in a satisfactory cleanly condition and have hot and cold water laid on in the separate preparation room.

A total of 246 visits were made at the various food premises mentioned.

Ninety-six premises are registered under Section 14 of the Food & Drugs Act, 1938, this includes 79 premises registered for the sale of Ice Cream, the remainder being premises registered for the preparation of preserved foods, sausages, etc.

There are no wholesale provision firms in the area and only very small quantities of tinned foods have had to be condemned in local shops. As these are invariably voluntarily surrendered and of such small quantities, the condemned items are left with the shopkeeper to throw into his dustbin. for collection and disposal by the Council's Refuse Service.

SECTION F.

Prevalence of and control over infectious and other diseases

The following notification of infectious diseases were received:-

Disease	1953 No. of cases	Rate per 1000 population		
		St. Austell 1952	Rural 1953	England & Wales 1953
Measles	288	0.18	13.07	12.36
Whooping Cough	176	0.41	8.00	3.58
Scarlet Fever	1	0.41	0.04	1.39
Pneumonia	4	0.09	0.18	0.84
Ophthalmia neonatorum	1	-	0.04	-
Meningococcal infection	1	0.04	0.04	0.03
Polio (Paralytic)	1	0.04	0.04	0.07
Food Poisoning	1	-	0.04	0.24
Dysentery	1	-	0.04	-
Puerperal Fever	1	-	2.89	18.23

It will be noted that there was a considerable outbreak of whooping cough of which three cases were under one year and twenty-nine between one and two years. There was no associated mortality. The response to the offer of immunisation has been disappointing.

As usual it proved to be impossible to trace definitely the origin of the infection in the single case of poliomyelitis but it was discovered that the case had associated with a known contact of another case.

The district had its usual biennial outbreak of measles. There was no mortality.

Diphtheria Immunisation

Immunisation in relation to the Child Population

Number of children at 31st December 1953 who had completed a course of Immunisation at any time before that date (i.e. at any time since 1st January 1939):-

Age at 31.12.53 i.e. born in year	Under 1 1953	1-4 1952-49	5-9 1948-44	10-14 1943-39	Under 15 Total
Last complete course of injections (whether primary or booster)					
A 1949-1953	26	635	874	651	2,186
B 1948 or earlier	0	0	318	218	536
C Estimated mid- year child population	335	1330	1580	1160	4,405
Immunity Index $\frac{A}{C}$	7.7	47.8	55.2	56.1	49.6

Combined whooping cough and diphtheria immunisation is now offered to infants aged 8 months so that it is possible for the immunity index for those infants to be 33.3%. The figure shown together with the low figure for those aged 1-4 years does indicate considerable apathy and a failure of parents to realise the risks to which they subject their children.

During the year the following immunisations were carried out:-

<u>Primary</u>	Diphtheria alone	74
	" plus Whooping Cough	139
	Whooping Cough alone	0
<u>Boosters</u>	Diphtheria alone	210
	" plus Whooping Cough	5

Smallpox Vaccination

68 primary vaccinations and 14 re-vaccinations were carried out during the year. The vaccinal state of the community is very low.

Tuberculosis

The number of cases on the register at the 31st December 1953 was as follows:-

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Pulmonary	68	39	107
Non-Pulmonary	8	7	15

The following table gives the age and sex distribution of new cases and deaths for the year 1953. Deaths in this table include all notified cases who may have died from other causes.

Age Group	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0 - 4								
5 - 9								
10 - 14								
15 - 19		2						
20 - 24	1	1						
25 - 34	2	1						
35 - 44					1	1		
45 - 54								
55 - 64	1				2			
65 - 74	3				3			
Over 75								
TOTAL	7	4			6	1		

In addition to the above the following alterations to the register were made:-

	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Transfers - in	3	3	-	1
" - out	5	3	2	2
Recoveries	1	1	-	-

An effort is being made to deal with the tuberculosis problem from the Public Health point of view by the examination of contacts of acute cases. All those who, on examination, show no sign of previous infection, are offered B.C.G. vaccination. In the rural area 38 persons have been protected during 1953.

The death rate from tuberculosis has shown a marked decline in recent years but the notification of new cases continues at the old level. The former is due to improved treatment. The latter is due partly to failure to detect all active cases of infection, partly to the increased longevity of cases, and partly to lack of care in those who are infected.

Factories Acts, 1937 & 1948.

Annual Report - Part I

Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	No. on Register (3)	No. of Inspections (4)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	1	16	4
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	2	73	9
(iii) Other premises in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	3	-	-
TOTAL		89	13

Cases in which DEFECTS were found

Particulars (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number of cases in which defects were found			
		Found (3)	Remedied (4)	Referred	
				To H.M. Inspector (5)	By H.M. Inspector (6)
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	4	3	3	Nil	Nil
TOTAL		3	3	Nil	Nil